

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCS-03 SCA-01

A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07

AID-05 TRSE-00 /106 W

-----201718Z 028523 /44

O R 201610Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3125

INFO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

S E C R E T KINSHASA 3712

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS PINS AEMR CG AO

SUBJ: SHABA INVASION - GENERAL ASSESSMENT ( APR 20)

1. ON THE SURFACE, THE RECENT UPTURN IN MOBUTU'S SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS GATHERED MOMENTUM LAST WEEK. HIS ARMED FORCES, BOLSTERED BY MOROCCAN TROOPS, APPEAR AT LAST TO HAVE TAKEN THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KATANGANS. ALTHOUGH NO HEADWAY WAS MADE TOWARD A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, MOBUTU'S CAMPAIGN FOR DIPOMATIC SUPPORT CONTINUED TO BEAR FRUIT. HIS RELIANCE ON INTIMIDATION TO STRENGTHEN HIS DOMESTIC

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POLITICAL POSITION, HOWEVER, REFLECTS CONTINUING TENSIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY: FRAGMENTARY REPORTS FROM THE FRONT SUGGEST THAT THE ZAIRIAN ARMED FORCES (FAZ), WITH MOROCCAN ASSISTANCE, HAVE BEGUN RECOVERING GROUND FROM THE KATANGANS. LOGISTICAL BOTTLENECKS MAY STALL THE FAZ-MOROCCAN EFFORT, HOWEVER, IN PART BECAUSE THE

WITHDRAWAL OF FRENCH TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT HAS HINDERED THE ADEQUATE RESUPPLY OF FRONT-LINE UNITS. APPARENTLY NERVOUS ABOUT THEIR EXPOSED POSITION, THE FRENCH HOPE WE WILL STEP INTO THE BREACH.

3. DIPLOMATIC: MOBUTU'S ADROIT MANIPULATION OF THE SOVIET-CUBAN MENACE CONTINUES TO YIELD DIVIDENDS. IN ADDITION TO A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF MESSAGES OF SUPPORT FROM AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN MODERATES, MOBUTU RECEIVED APR 16 A SAUDI DELEGATION LED BY THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER. ALTHOUGH DENIED BY DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING TO EFFECT THAT SAUDIS HAVE PROMISED SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

4. WITH THE RETURN TO LAGOS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER GARBA, NIGERIA'S MEDIATION EFFORT MAY PICK UP AGAIN. A GREATER OAU ROLE MAY ALSO EMERGE FROM SECGEN ETEKI'S CURRENT VISITS TO LUANDA AND LAGOS. ALTHOUGH NYERERE'S SUGGESTION THAT NIGERIA PROPOSE A SPECIAL OAU MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE WAS DISMISSED BY OBASANJO ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO ORGANIZE. MOBUTU REMAINS CONVINCED HOWEVER, THAT A SUCCESSFUL COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KATANGANS IS A PREREQUISITE FOR NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, TENSIONS BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE CONTINUE TO RISE.

4. POLITICAL: MOBUTU CONTINUED LAST WEEK TO RELY ON INTIMIDATION -- BOTH THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF A MOROCCAN CONTINGENT INTO HIS PERSONAL SECURITY FORCE AND THROUGH CONTINUED ARRESTS OF THOSE SUSPECTED OF OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES -- TO SHORE UP HIS DOMESTIC POLITICAL POSITION. AN ADDITIONAL SIGN OF WEAKNESS, MOBUTU'S RELIANCE ON MOROCCANS FOR PERSONAL SECURITY MAY COMBINE WITH HIS SECRET

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READINESS TO PLACE BELGIAN AND FRENCH OFFICERS IN KEY POSITIONS AT FAZ HEADQUARTERS TO ADD TO THE GRIEVANCES OF HIS ARMED FORCES. ALTHOUGH SEVERAL EXECUTIONS HAVE BEEN REPORTED, MOBUTU APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVES WITH LESS DRASTIC MEASURES. AT LEAST SOME OF THOSE ARRESTED HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN RELEASED, INCLUDING FIKIN TRADE FAIR HEAD TUMBA TUNKADI AND FORMER LABOR LEADER KIKONGI DI MWINSI. TUMBA IS CAUTIOUSLY RESUMING HIS NORMAL ACTIVITIES, BUT KIKONGI HAS BEEN STRIPPED OF HIS MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU AND OF HIS POSITION AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LABOR UNION.

5. THE MOST PROMINENT ARREST OF LAST WEEK, HOWEVER, DOES NOT APPEAR TO FIT THE ABOVE PATTERN OF MOBUTU INSPIRED INTIMIDATION. THE EXPERIENCE OF FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENCY BISENGIMANA, WHO WAS PICKED UP FOR QUESTIONING AND SUBSEQUENTLY PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST, MAY INDICATE INSTEAD THAT THE "REFORM FACTION" WITHIN THE REGIME IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS, AGAINST GROWING ODDS, TO REDUCE MOBUTU'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING. CUTLER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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